

January 31, 2019

Dr. Jonathan E. Sherin
Director
Department of Mental Health
560 South Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90020

Dear Dr. Sherin:

The Quality and Productivity Commissioners thank you for an informative update received at the Department visit on January 22, 2019. Commissioners noted the Department's focus on connecting people with the right mental health service(s) at the right time and in the right place. Commissioners commended efforts to integrate care within an increasingly collaborative health system, alongside housing and services.

Commissioners were pleased to learn of the Department's continuing engagement with clients, families, first responders, and community-based organizations, including training for faith leaders to better identify mental health issues and the resources available to them. Of special note was the briefing from members of the Homeless Outreach Mobile Engagement (HOME) team, which provides services to the most vulnerable and difficult-to-engage homeless individuals. HOME teams operate in close collaboration with law enforcement, community partners, and specialty programs to provide emergent and urgent care as needed.

We were very pleased to learn of your Department's partnership with the District Attorney to provide mental health-related training to its newly created mental health division, a specialized legal team dedicated to working with justice-involved individuals who are living with mental illness.

Members of the Commission also recognized your quality and productivity improvements in the following areas:

- Accelerating the transition to performance based contracting, which focuses on long-term client outcomes and provides incentives to providers to deliver effective mental health services to clients—and doing so in an environment of increasing state-level performance-related oversight.
- Allocating Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Prevention and Early Intervention funds to expand the Department of Children and Family Services' Prevention and Aftercare Networks programs and the Department of Public Health's Home Visiting Program.



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Quality and Productivity
Commission**

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effective and caring service"***

- Seeking to increase the availability of hospital beds available to individuals dealing with mental health-related illness. The Department is working with the First and Fifth Districts to assess all contracted mental health hospital beds and find ways to increase the number of beds available.

We look forward to working with you on a range of quality and productivity issues to improve County services, including:

- Addressing the challenges of payment reform and ensuring funding dollars (e.g., MHSA) are maximized and utilized for the intended purpose, including to stem the loss of board-and-care beds and sites.
- Pursuing more holistic treatment approaches (e.g., the Trieste community mental health model), with a community and medical response that puts the individual, rather than the disorder, as the focus of care.
- Continuing a “relentless engagement” approach to reach and treat individuals with high rates of hospital admission and/or institutionalization, keeping both individual rights and public safety concerns in mind.

Thank you for a productive meeting. We will continue to work closely with your Productivity Managers, Leticia Ximénez and Kumar Menon. Please contact Jackie Guevarra, Executive Director, at (213) 974-1361 for additional information.

Sincerely,



J. SHAWN LANDRES
Chair

SL:JTG

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